

BE INFORMED, BE HEALTHY

Read menu labels and make healthier choices.

Nutrition Labeling Information for Restaurant Staff

About the regulation

- The nutrition labeling regulation requires that chain restaurants provide customers with information about calories, sodium, saturated fat and carbohydrates for standard items on the menu for more than 90 days.
- It is most useful when customers receive nutrition information at the point of ordering. The regulation:
 - requires restaurants with menu boards to post the calorie information on the menu board. Other nutrition information (sodium, saturated fat and carbohydrates) must be provided in a pamphlet, brochure, or poster at the point of ordering.
 - requires restaurants with menus to list all nutrition information in the regular menu, a menu insert, a menu appendix, a supplemental menu or electronic kiosks.
- Many King County restaurants choose to voluntarily provide nutrition information in a variety of ways, but the new regulation **requires** that chain restaurants provide this information. Grocery, convenience stores and theaters are not included. A chain restaurant is defined as:
 - having 15 or more national locations
 - collectively having gross annual sales of \$1 million or more
 - having 80% of menu items substantially the same at 15 locations
- The regulation went into effect for menus and menu boards on January 1, 2009. The regulation requires that nutrition information be available at chain restaurant drive-throughs on August 1, 2009.
- Chain restaurants may obtain the nutritional analysis of menu items in several ways: laboratory analysis, from cookbooks or by using nutrition analysis computer software. Customers who have questions about the accuracy of the nutrition information being provided can be referred to the Healthy Eating Web site where they may email their concern.

Why it's important

- Local surveys indicate that the majority of King County residents want chain restaurants to provide nutrition information.
- Nutrition information is especially important to people who are trying to prevent or manage chronic diseases like heart disease, diabetes, and high blood pressure. In King County:
 - over half of adults are overweight or obese, a contributing factor to developing chronic disease
 - heart disease is the second leading cause of death
 - in a recent 10 year period the number of people with diabetes has doubled
- The 2000 calorie a day recommendation for adults is based on the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans. These guidelines were created to show how good dietary habits can promote health and reduce risk for chronic diseases.
- People may need fewer or more than 2000 calories per day based on their gender, age and physical activity level. In general, young children and adults over 51 need fewer than 2000 calories.
- People can learn more about their own calorie needs by using the American Heart Association's MyFatsTranslator on Public Health's Healthy Eating Web site: www.kingcounty.gov/health/healthyeating.

For more information

To learn more about the nutrition labeling regulation in King County or to leave a comment, visit Public Health's Healthy Eating Web site at **www.kingcounty.gov/health/healthyeating**. If you have questions about nutrition labeling in your facility, email mlandtf@kingcounty.gov or call 206-205-3349.